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Report of the Second Committee*

Rapporteur: Mr. Abdulmalik **Alshabibi** (Yemen)

I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 52 (see A/60/488, para. 2). Action on sub-items (e) and (i) was taken at the 27th and 36th meetings, on 10 November and 13 December 2005. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-items is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/60/SR.27 and 36).

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/60/L.19 and A/C.2/60/L.63

2. At the 27th meeting, on 10 November, the representative of Switzerland, on behalf of Andorra, Argentina, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Nepal, Pakistan, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Switzerland and Tajikistan, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Sustainable mountain development" (A/C.2/60/L.19). Subsequently, Afghanistan, Albania, Armenia, Bhutan, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, France, Greece, Haiti, Lebanon, Malawi,

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Mexico, Peru, the Philippines, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Uganda, Ukraine and the United Republic of Tanzania joined in sponsoring the draft resolution (see A/C.2/60/SR.27), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolution 53/24 of 10 November 1998, by which it proclaimed 2002 the International Year of Mountains,

"*Recalling also* its resolutions 55/189 of 20 December 2000, 57/245 of 20 December 2002 and 58/216 of 23 December 2003,

"*Recalling further* its resolution 59/238 of 22 December 2004 on rendering assistance to poor mountain countries to overcome obstacles in socio-economic and ecological areas,

"*Recognizing* chapter 13 of Agenda 21 and all relevant paragraphs of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ('Johannesburg Plan of Implementation'), in particular paragraph 42 thereof, as the overall policy frameworks for sustainable development in mountain regions,

"*Noting* the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions ('Mountain Partnership'), launched during the World Summit on Sustainable Development with benefits from the committed support of forty-five countries, fourteen intergovernmental organizations and sixty-four organizations from major groups, as an important approach to addressing the various interrelated dimensions of sustainable development in mountain regions,

"*Recalling* the Bishkek Mountain Platform, the outcome document of the Bishkek Global Mountain Summit, held at Bishkek from 28 October to 1 November 2002, which was the concluding event of the International Year of Mountains,

"1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the status of sustainable mountain development;

"2. *Notes with appreciation* that a growing network of Governments, organizations, major groups and individuals around the world recognize the importance of sustainable development of mountain regions for poverty eradication, as well as the global importance of mountains as the source of most of the Earth's freshwater, as repositories of rich biological diversity, as popular destinations for recreation and tourism and as areas of important cultural diversity, knowledge and heritage;

"3. *Notes with concern* that there remain key challenges to implementing sustainable development, eradicating poverty in mountain regions and protecting mountain ecosystems, and that mountain populations are frequently among the poorest of a given country;

"4. *Notes* that growing demand for water and other natural resources, the consequences of global climate change, erosion, deforestation and other forms of watershed degradation, the increasing occurrence of natural disasters, increasing rates of outmigration, conflicts and the pressures of industry, transport, tourism, mining and agriculture are some of the key challenges in

fragile mountain ecosystems to implementing sustainable development and alleviating poverty in mountains, consistent with the Millennium Development Goals;

"5. *Expresses its deep concern* at the number and scale of disasters and their increasing impact within recent years, which have resulted in massive loss of life and long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences for vulnerable societies throughout the world, in particular in mountain regions and developing countries;

"6. *Underlines* that action at the national level is a key factor in achieving progress in sustainable mountain development, welcomes its steady increase in recent years with a multitude of events, activities and initiatives, and calls upon the international community to support the efforts in developing countries to develop and implement strategies and programmes, as well as enabling policies and laws, for the sustainable development of mountains, within the framework of national development plans;

"7. *Encourages* the further establishment of committees or similar multi-stakeholder institutional arrangements and mechanisms at the national level to enhance intersectoral coordination and collaboration for sustainable development in mountain regions;

"8. *Also encourages* increased involvement by civil society and the private sector in the development and implementation of programmes and activities related to sustainable development in mountains;

"9. *Underlines* the need for mountain women's improved access to resources as well as the need to strengthen the role of mountain women in decision-making processes that affect their communities, cultures and environments;

"10. *Stresses* that indigenous cultures, traditions and knowledge, including in the field of medicine, are to be fully considered, respected and promoted in development policy and planning in mountain regions, and recommends that mountain indigenous communities be directly involved in decisions affecting their lives;

"11. *Recognizes* that many developing countries and countries with economies in transition need to be assisted in the formulation and implementation of national strategies and programmes for sustainable mountain development, through bilateral, multilateral and South-South cooperation, as well as through non-traditional arrangements;

"12. *Notes* that funding for sustainable development in mountains has become an increasingly important issue, especially in view of the greater recognition of the global importance of mountains and the high level of extreme poverty, food insecurity and hardship facing mountain communities;

"13. *Encourages* Governments, the United Nations system, the international financial institutions, the Global Environment Facility and other relevant United Nations funding mechanisms, such as the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, as well as all relevant stakeholders from civil society organizations and the

private sector, to provide support, including through voluntary financial contributions, to local, national and international programmes and projects for sustainable development in mountain regions;

"14. *Underlines* the importance for sustainable development in mountains of a wide range of funding sources, such as public-private partnerships, payments for environmental services, increased opportunities for microfinance, including microinsurance, small housing loans, savings, education and health accounts, and support for entrepreneurs seeking to develop small and medium-sized businesses, as well as debt relief, debt for sustainable development swaps or multicreditor debt swap arrangements, as appropriate;

"15. *Notes with satisfaction* the recent adoption of the programme of work on mountain biological diversity by the Convention on Biological Diversity, the overall purpose of which is the significant reduction of the loss of mountain biological diversity by 2010 at the global, regional and national levels, and its implementation, which aims at making a significant contribution to poverty eradication in mountain regions;

"16. *Recognizes* that mountain ranges are usually shared among several countries, and in this context encourages transboundary cooperation approaches, where the States concerned agree to the sustainable development of mountain ranges and information-sharing in this regard;

"17. *Welcomes* in this context the Convention on the Protection of the Alps, which promotes constructive new approaches to integrated, sustainable development of the Alps, including through its thematic protocols on spatial planning, mountain farming, conservation of nature and landscape, mountain forests, population and culture, tourism, soil protection, energy and transport, and welcomes the recent membership of the Convention in the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions;

"18. *Welcomes also* the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, adopted and signed by the seven countries of the region to provide a framework for cooperation and multisectoral policy coordination, a platform for joint strategies for sustainable development and a forum for dialogue between all involved stakeholders;

"19. *Stresses* the importance of capacity-building, institutional strengthening and educational programmes in order to foster sustainable mountain development at all levels and to enhance awareness of good practices in sustainable development in mountain regions and of the nature of relationships between highland and lowland areas;

"20. *Encourages* the development and implementation of global, regional and national communication programmes to build on the awareness and momentum for change created by the International Year of Mountains and the opportunity provided annually by International Mountain Day on 11 December;

"21. *Also encourages* Member States to collect and produce information and to establish databases devoted to mountains so as to capitalize on

knowledge to support interdisciplinary research, programmes and projects and to improve decision-making and planning;

"22. *Further encourages* all relevant entities of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, to further enhance their constructive efforts to strengthen inter-agency collaboration to achieve more effective implementation of chapter 13 of Agenda 21 and paragraph 42 of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, taking into account the inter-agency group on mountains and the need for the further involvement of the United Nations system, in particular the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations University, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund, international financial institutions and other relevant international organizations;

"23. *Recognizes* the efforts of the Mountain Partnership implemented in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/61 (25 July 2003), invites the international community and other relevant partners, including civil society and the private sector, to consider joining the Mountain Partnership, and requests the Partnership Secretariat to report on its activities and achievements to the 14th meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development in 2006 in regard to the thematic issues of energy, climate change, air pollution and atmosphere, and industrial development;

"24. *Notes with appreciation* in this context the efforts of the Mountain Partnership to cooperate with existing multilateral instruments relevant to mountains, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and mountain-related regional instruments such as the Convention on the Protection of the Alps and the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians;

"25. *Takes note* of the conclusions of the second global meeting of the members of the Mountain Partnership, held in Cusco, Peru, on 28 and 29 October 2004, at the invitation of the Government of Peru;

"26. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session on the status of sustainable development in mountain regions, including an overall analysis of the challenges that lie ahead and appropriate policy recommendations, under a sub-item entitled 'Sustainable mountain development' of the item entitled 'Sustainable development'."

3. At its 36th meeting, on 13 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Sustainable mountain development" (A/C.2/60/L.63), submitted by the Vice-Chairman, Stefano Toscano (Switzerland), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/60/L.19 (see A/C.2/60/SR.36).

4. Also at the 36th meeting, the Committee was informed that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications (see A/C.2/60/SR.36).

5. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/60/L.63 (see para. 7).

6. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/60/L.63, draft resolution A/C.2/60/L.19 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

7. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Sustainable mountain development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 53/24 of 10 November 1998, by which it proclaimed 2002 the International Year of Mountains,

Recalling also its resolutions 55/189 of 20 December 2000, 57/245 of 20 December 2002 and 58/216 of 23 December 2003,

Recalling further its resolution 59/238 of 22 December 2004 on rendering assistance to poor mountain countries to overcome obstacles in socio-economic and ecological areas,

Recognizing chapter 13 of Agenda 21[1] and all relevant paragraphs of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[2] in particular paragraph 42 thereof, as the overall policy frameworks for sustainable development in mountain regions,

Noting the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions ("Mountain Partnership"), launched during the World Summit on Sustainable Development, with benefits from the committed support of forty-four countries, fourteen intergovernmental organizations and sixty-eight organizations from major groups, as an important approach to addressing the various interrelated dimensions of sustainable development in mountain regions,

Noting also the Bishkek Mountain Platform,[3] the outcome document of the Bishkek Global Mountain Summit, held at Bishkek from 28 October to 1 November 2002, which was the concluding event of the International Year of Mountains,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Sustainable mountain development";[4]

2. *Notes with appreciation* that a growing network of Governments, organizations, major groups and individuals around the world recognize the importance of sustainable development of mountain regions for poverty eradication, as well as the global importance of mountains as the source of most of the Earth's freshwater, as repositories of rich biological diversity, as popular destinations for recreation and tourism and as areas of important cultural diversity, knowledge and heritage;

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[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

[2] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[3] A/C.2/57/7, annex.

[4] A/60/309.

3. *Notes with concern* that there remain key challenges to achieving sustainable development, eradicating poverty in mountain regions and protecting mountain ecosystems, and that populations in mountain regions are frequently among the poorest of a given country;

4. *Notes* that the growing demand for natural resources, including water, the consequences of erosion, deforestation and other forms of watershed degradation, the occurrence of natural disasters, as well as increasing outmigration, the pressures of industry, transport, tourism, mining, agriculture and the consequences of global climate change are some of the key challenges in fragile mountain ecosystems to implementing sustainable development and eradicating poverty in mountains, consistent with the Millennium Development Goals;

5. *Expresses its deep concern* at the number and scale of disasters and their increasing impact within recent years, which have resulted in massive loss of life and long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences for vulnerable societies throughout the world, in particular in mountain regions, especially those in developing countries;

6. *Underlines* that action at the national level is a key factor in achieving progress in sustainable mountain development, welcomes its steady increase in recent years with a multitude of events, activities and initiatives, and invites the international community to support the efforts of developing countries to develop and implement strategies and programmes, including, where required, enabling policies and laws for the sustainable development of mountains, within the framework of national development plans;

7. *Encourages* the further establishment of committees or similar multi-stakeholder institutional arrangements and mechanisms at the national level to enhance intersectoral coordination and collaboration for sustainable development in mountain regions;

8. *Also encourages* increased involvement of relevant stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector in the development and implementation of programmes and activities related to sustainable development in mountains;

9. *Underlines* the need for improved access to resources for women in mountain regions as well as the need to strengthen the role of women in mountain regions in decision-making processes that affect their communities, cultures and environments;

10. *Stresses* that indigenous cultures, traditions and knowledge, including in the field of medicine, are to be fully considered, respected and promoted in development policy and planning in mountain regions, and underlines the importance of promoting full participation and involvement of mountain communities in decisions that affect them and of integrating indigenous knowledge, heritage and values in all development initiatives;

11. *Recognizes* that many developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition need to be assisted in the formulation and implementation of national strategies and programmes for sustainable mountain development, through bilateral, multilateral and South-South cooperation, as well as through other forms of collaborative approaches;

12. *Notes* that funding for sustainable mountain development has become increasingly important, especially in view of the greater recognition of the global importance of mountains and the high level of extreme poverty, food insecurity and hardship facing mountain communities;

13. *Invites* Governments, the United Nations system, the international financial institutions, the Global Environment Facility, all relevant United Nations conventions and their funding mechanisms, within their respective mandates, and all relevant stakeholders from civil society and the private sector to consider providing support, including through voluntary financial contributions, to local, national and international programmes and projects for sustainable development in mountain regions;

14. *Underlines* the importance for sustainable development in mountains of exploring a wide range of funding sources, such as public-private partnerships, increased opportunities for microfinance, including microinsurance, small housing loans, savings, education and health accounts, and support for entrepreneurs seeking to develop small and medium-sized businesses and, where appropriate, on a case-by-case basis, debt for sustainable development swaps;

15. *Underlines also* the importance of enhancing the sustainability of ecosystems that provide essential resources and services for human well-being and economic activity and developing innovative means of financing for their protection;

16. *Notes with satisfaction* the recent adoption by the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity,[5] of the programme of work on mountain biological diversity, the overall purpose of which is the significant reduction of the loss of mountain biological diversity by 2010 at the global, regional and national levels, and its implementation, which aims at making a significant contribution to poverty eradication in mountain regions;

17. *Recognizes* that mountain ranges are usually shared among several countries, and in this context encourages transboundary cooperation approaches, where the States concerned agree, to the sustainable development of mountain ranges and information-sharing in this regard;

18. *Notes with appreciation* in this context the Convention on the Protection of the Alps,[6] which promotes constructive new approaches to integrated, sustainable development of the Alps, including through its thematic protocols on spatial planning, mountain farming, conservation of nature and landscape, mountain forests, population and culture, tourism, soil protection, energy and transport, and welcomes the recent membership of the Convention in the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions;

19. *Also notes with appreciation* the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, adopted and signed by the seven countries of the region to provide a framework for cooperation and multisectoral policy coordination, a platform for joint strategies for sustainable development and a forum for dialogue between all involved stakeholders;

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[5] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1760, No. 30619.

[6] Ibid., vol. 1917, No. 32724.

20. *Stresses* the importance of capacity-building, institutional strengthening and educational programmes in order to foster sustainable mountain development at all levels and to enhance awareness of good practices in sustainable development in mountain regions and of the nature of relationships between highland and lowland areas;

21. *Encourages* the development and implementation of global, regional and national communication programmes to build on the awareness and momentum for change created by the International Year of Mountains and the opportunity provided annually by International Mountain Day on 11 December;

22. *Also encourages* Member States to collect and produce information and to establish databases devoted to mountains so as to capitalize on knowledge to support interdisciplinary research, programmes and projects and to improve decision-making and planning;

23. *Further encourages* all relevant entities of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, to further enhance their constructive efforts to strengthen inter-agency collaboration to achieve more effective implementation of relevant chapters of Agenda 21,[1] including chapter 13 and paragraph 42 and other relevant paragraphs of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation,[2] taking into account the inter-agency group on mountains and the need for the further involvement of the United Nations system, in particular the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations University, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund, as well as international financial institutions and other relevant international organizations;

24. *Recognizes* the efforts of the Mountain Partnership implemented in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/61 of 25 July 2003, invites the international community and other relevant stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, to consider joining the Mountain Partnership, and invites the Partnership Secretariat to report on its activities and achievements to the fourteenth meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development in 2006, including in regard to the thematic cluster issues of energy, climate change, air pollution and atmosphere and industrial development;

25. *Notes with appreciation* in this context the efforts of the Mountain Partnership to cooperate with existing multilateral instruments relevant to mountains, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,[7] the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[8] the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and mountain-related regional instruments such as the Convention on the Protection of the Alps and the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians;

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[7] Ibid., vol. 1954, No. 33480.

[8] Ibid., vol. 1771, No. 30822.

26. *Takes note* of the conclusions of the second global meeting of the members of the Mountain Partnership, held in Cusco, Peru, on 28 and 29 October 2004, at the invitation of the Government of Peru;

27. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session on the implementation of the present resolution, under a sub-item entitled "Sustainable mountain development" of the item entitled "Sustainable development".